

Hand in Hand...
Linking Lives



Jul/Aug 2025

GOT — GROWING OLDER TOGETHER

570-630-0509 830 Main St. #574 Honesdale, PA 18431 www.growingoldertogether.org

*If you need
something, just ask!*



Many Hands Make Light Work

This proverb originated in the early 1300s and was popularized by John Heywood, a 16th century English playwright who served under King Henry VIII. Or to put it in our era: "Volunteering is at the very core of being a human. No one has made it through life without someone else's help," says Heather French Henry, politician, author and veterans' advocate. To this day, these words urge people to join in to make a task easier and faster to complete.

GOT Call Managers are our first volunteers to interact with a potential or existing member. They are the ones who take the calls with requests and schedule the services these people in our community may need. These volunteers get the ball rolling.

GOT volunteers, people who help our senior community to thrive, are the backbone of our organization. They may drive members to routine or specialist doctor appointments. They do small tasks around members' homes to make them more efficient or comfortable. They make social visits. There are many ways our volunteers can foster a sense of belonging and purpose to our fellow residents.

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These volunteers are the true reason for our organization to exist as we match needs and helpers, GOT volunteers with skills, time and desire to help. "As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands--one for helping yourself, the other for helping others," as Audrey Hepburn said, who herself, at the age of thirteen, delivered messages on her bike for the Dutch Resistance during WWII.

The bottom line is that if we didn't have volunteers, we could not exist! There are many opportunities for volunteers to make a difference.

GOT Board members, also volunteers, are crucial to the agency. They are responsible for overseeing the GOT organization's governance, strategy and financial health. As Board President, I have many responsibilities, including planning monthly meetings, sitting on committees and ensuring that all board members have opportunities to contribute and participate in discussions. At this point I am doing all the duties above. I have volunteered my help in many places for almost 40 years. When I heard about Growing Older Together, I knew I had to get involved. As the senior citizen I would be some day, I knew I would need some of these services. Of course it has come way too soon. But let me tell you what volunteering does for me. It reduces my stress and is great for my mental health. I have the opportunity to socialize. I have met a lot of people whom I would never have known.

Volunteering has brought me happiness. Yes, it is unpaid, but it is priceless. And as Bernard Meltzer, long-time national radio host pointed out: "There is no better exercise for your heart than reaching down and helping to lift someone up."

GOT needs to grow with the times. Can you become involved?

(By Diane Yaddow, President of Growing Older Together)

When You Look, What Do You See?

In the winter of 2016, I was terribly discouraged and struggling to keep my spirits up. After almost two years in creating concepts, a business I had in development, fizzled out due to partnership conflict. Every day I sat in meditation trying to empty my head and waiting for clarity. Finally, my husband suggested I write down on a piece of paper all the things I like to do best and find a way to turn them into my next project. At the top of my list was "spend more time in the woods." Within a couple of days, the name "The Outside Institute" flashed into my mind and I saw right away what it could be: a way to connect people to the wild, a place that had brought me so much joy, insight and healing.

I already knew there was a deep collective yearning to feel more grounded, more rooted in nature.

The profound cultural shift engendered by the internet and our highly digitized lives has left many people disconnected, anxious and depressed. We have lost so much of our ancestral knowledge that being outside surrounded by plants and trees no longer feels natural to many of us. But we seem to intuit that in those outdoor spaces lies an antidote to what we're experiencing. It occurred to me that I could offer the knowledge of our local woods—the trees, the flowers, the critters, the living systems—that I had accrued after almost a decade of living full-time in the Catskills. More than anything, I wanted to pass on to others a new way of seeing and being in the world that might help mitigate the modern condition.

In 1999, two botanists, Elisabeth E. Schussler and James H. Wandersee, launched a national campaign in public schools with the catchphrase "Prevent Plant Blindness." They defined this condition as "the inability to see or notice the plants in one's environment; the inability to recognize the importance of plants in the biosphere and in human affairs; and the misguided anthropocentric ranking of plants as inferior to animals and, thus, as unworthy of consideration." This phenomenon resonated with me, because I'd had a sort of awakening when I began learning to identify the individual species of plants in my woods. What was at first a giant sea of green, slowly began to reveal itself as hemlocks, pines, hornbeams, tulip poplars, wild lettuce, sweetfern, knotweed and on and on. Soon, entering the forest was like getting together with a group of friends instead of walking among strangers. And the stories they tell are endlessly fascinating!



*The berries of the non-native autumn olive bush (Elaeagnus umbellata) are edible and can be fermented into a lightly carbonated drink.
(photo credits: Elena Uryadova)*



Laura Chavez Silverman with the berries of Rosa multiflora, widely considered to be invasive, but which offer rose hips rich in vitamin C.

With The Outside Institute, my idea was simply to take people into wild places, to lure them with an invitation to be more curious and more connected to the lands they inhabit. That's how I began guiding walks through our beautiful woods, fields, marshes and mountains. Small groups of city folks and locals nibbled on mugwort and Virginia pepperweed and wild raspberries. Marveled at indigo bunting birds and red russula fungi. Touched ferns, hugged oaks and smelled black locust blossoms. It opened their eyes to a new way of seeing that calmed them, inspired them and changed them forever. As it had originally done for me.

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The Outside Institute has published three volumes of its *Field Guide to the Northeast*, a seasonal series that is accessible to beginning naturalists, and recently opened a brick-&-mortar outpost at 3344 Route 97, Barryville Towne Square, Barryville, NY 12719.

The community is regularly invited into this teaching space, which holds a reference library and many specimens of local flora, fauna and fungi. The guides and a calendar of events can be found at [www.theoutsideinstitute.org](http://www.theoutsideinstitute.org).

**(by Laura Chávez Silverman, founding naturalist of The Outside Institute)**

## *Getting to Know You*

We live in a society where young and old are increasingly segregated, with very limited opportunity for the two age groups to interact. But these "bookend generations" could become great resources for each other. All we need to do is put them in the same place. Now high schools and colleges are doing just that. It's a trend that benefits young and old in a number of innovative ways.

Lackawanna College's Scranton, PA campus is where students pursuing any full-time degree or diploma are eligible for free tuition in exchange for participation in a home-health work program for folk over age 60. The scholarship of \$70,000 is a win-win program. The Lackawanna County Caregiver Scholarship pays full tuition at Lackawanna College for any student who works at least 15 hours a week as a home-care worker. The program provides training and requires a background check and driver's license. The work is similar to what GOT volunteers do: run errands, offer companionship, handle household tasks, prepare meals for senior county residents in need of those services.

"This is money well spent to ensure that older county residents get the help they need, while making college affordable for young people," says Lackawanna County Commissioner Bill Gaughan. The goal is to help reduce the high number of seniors nationwide who are on waiting lists for services, as well as provide intergenerational interaction.

Students at the Alternative Learning Center in Dubuque, Iowa can receive physical education credit when they go out into the community and do yard work for locals who are older or disabled. The Center serves 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders at risk for dropping out. In the program, they mow lawns, pick up yard waste and tidy up yards, plant trees. Nick, a student participant, says: "Without this program I would never have met any of my neighbors. I'm more of a 'go-to-school-go-to-work-go-home-repeat' kinda guy. I would never have met any of these people." The program has been a great success in part because it is so uncomplicated.

The Balfour Collegiate High School in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada has an annual dance where students invite senior citizens from the community to the big event! Most of the seniors are from low-income housing units and the dance gives them a rare chance to get out and not be shut-in! Transportation is provided and students in the cooking class help prepare and serve the dinners for the evening. The event also includes performances.

This 30-year tradition is a source of pride for both the students and the community, and is referred to as "Seniors Night" or "Seniors Dance." The students also benefit from the evening. They create decorations, and serve in every capacity: assisting the commercial cooking teacher, putting on entertainment and acting as dancing companions.



Cec Chapman, 90, says the event is a special one for seniors because they get to have a very rare night out. "A lot of seniors are shut-ins. Most seniors don't like going out in the evening, but for this, they do. The food and the old-time music, which brings us back to our early days, is a big boost for the participants. It's the intermixing of students and seniors," he says. "It's the entertainment and everything that goes with it."

**(By Jan Goodwin, award-winning journalist, author and editor of the GOT Newsletter)**

### *Falling is No Joke*

"I've fallen and I can't get up," was part of an advertisement campaign before it became both iconic and then, a joke. It never was a joke. It is a serious reflection of an all too common occurrence for seniors, often with serious consequences. It happened to me, first with a shattered elbow injury, requiring delicate surgery, and then, a fractured pelvis, healed after six months of rehab. Each one happened in the course of daily life activities.

I joined the statistics list. The National Institute on Aging says that more than one in four adults 65 and older fall every year. The important thing to remember is that falls are not inevitable. They can be avoided. According to the National Council on Aging's Center for Healthy Aging, you can reduce your risk. One expert says that falling can actually cause a fear of it that can make a person less active, less social. That is a big mistake since it increases risk. It also predicts you will fall again. Building confidence by taking positive steps to reduce risk is the best way stay safe.



There are "internal risks": vision problems, mobility issues, chronic conditions like arthritis, and distractions. Factors in home or community posing danger are "external risks": uneven sidewalks, exposed electrical cords, slippery rugs. I tripped over a slightly raised manhole I did not see coming. My friend's dog entangled her in his leash and down she went. Experts often cite statistics to show that although more than half of falls by older adults happen in the home environment, the other half are everywhere else! Also, there are links to reactions to side effects or medication interactions and blood pressure changes, causing dizziness, blurred vision, fainting or loss of balance.

Can you stand on one foot for at least 6 seconds? Try it; practice it. It will reduce your risk of falling, according to experts. Improve and maintain strength and balance, says Jonathan Lee-Confer, an assistant professor of physical therapy at the University of Arizona. He calls fall prevention exercises "activity promotion" and the sooner you begin them, the better. You can learn techniques and practice them at home or go to classes. Tai Chi and yoga, which can be done on a chair, are great for balance and increasing leg and arm strength. Stronger arms can help you stay upright or if you fall, help you get up. Staying social can also protect against falls. Relationships lead us to make plans, which naturally increases physical activity.

Specific exercises can be helpful but it really gives you a leg up - pun intended - if you are reasonably active overall. Getting your heart rate up for short periods is beneficial and can happen with everyday activities - gardening and walking are good choices. Flexibility assists you when you feel unbalanced. Practice getting up and down from a chair without using your arms. There are exercises to help you learn how to catch yourself if you lose your balance.



If you do fall, don't try to get up too fast. Assess your injuries first. There are possible non-visible injuries--a concussion, which could result in confusion, dizziness, headaches or visual changes. Be sure to inform your doctor or Urgent Care even if you feel embarrassed. He or she can look further into what might have caused the fall and recommend next steps. It is well documented that clutter, scatter rugs and untidy stairs are dangerous. Here are suggestions beyond eliminating those. Keep frequently used items in easy reach; put a sturdy chair in the bedroom and kitchen to give support when getting dressed or cooking.

A table by the front door ensures groceries bags are not tripping hazards. Consider bright, non-glare light bulbs, night lights, and shower chair and adjustable shower head. It will cost more but it can be worthwhile to install a walk-in shower and widen door or hallways to accommodate a walker.

Falling can be risky business. It can happen to any of us, young or old and everywhere in between. Take whatever precautions you can!

**(By Shirley J. Longshore, writer and editor)**

## ***Sullivan County Summers – History in the Making***

"If we taught history by telling stories, no one would ever forget it," said Rudyard Kipling. History is about the stories. And John Conway is a master of them.

Conway has been the official Sullivan County Historian for 32 years. He was a founding Board member of The Delaware Company, an organization that promotes the history of the Upper Delaware River Valley. He's appeared on the Fox TV series: *Million Dollar Mysteries* discussing the lost Catskills treasure of prohibition era gangster Dutch Schultz, and on the BBC TV documentary: *Stand Up America, discussing the impact of the Borscht Belt on American comedy*. Among the hundreds of magazine and newspaper articles he's written are 65 that tell the tale of the hotel industry in Sullivan County NY in the book: *The Borscht Belt in Retrospect*.

The first summer hotel was built in 1845 in White Lake to house fisherman angling for record-sized trout. By the end of the Civil War, tourism was an important part of Sullivan County's economy. Eventually, the railroads brought thousands of summer visitors escaping the heat of the cities. The number of hotels grew to accommodate them. Many of these refused Jewish vacationers so other resorts began to provide lodging for these families.

A downturn in popularity between boom periods, 1890-1915 and 1940-1965, forced Sullivan County to reinvent itself, a process Conway calls Ratchet/Hatchet/Pivot—the hospitality industry phenomenon developed, collapsed, then transitioned to attract new visitors. The area experienced the ultimate collapse of tourism in the mid-1960s. John attributes the decline of the Borscht Belt hotels to "The five A's": Cheap airfare; air-conditioning in city apartments; assimilation of Jews into mainstream society; the American plan of all-inclusive vacations became passe; and the arrogance of hotel owners and county leadership, who thought that the resort industry was too big to fail.

Anticipating America's 250th birthday next summer, Conway's second book due out this year is *The Cushetunk Spy* about Robert Land, a respected justice of the peace who settled in an area that would become Wayne County, PA. Remaining loyal to the British crown during the Revolutionary War, he became a spy for the King. Captured and put on trial, he was sentenced to death, but his conviction was overturned. Awaiting a new trial, he joined another band of Tories. Shot and wounded, he escaped to New York and eventually to Canada to be reunited years later with his family he thought had been slaughtered, while they thought he'd been killed. The home of Loyalist John Land, Robert's oldest son, still stands on the Delaware River, just north of Milanville. Built in 1796, it's considered the oldest home in Wayne County.

Conway says, "One of the things that has always excited me and probably kept me going as a historian for so long is that, when it comes to Sullivan County, I'm regularly discovering these links to much greater events." When original settlers came to our area from Connecticut, they sometimes were backed by investors who put up money to buy the land.

A recent discovery: one of these men was the famous American traitor, Benedict Arnold.

A manuscript about Murder Inc. and organized crime in the Catskills is Conway's work-in-progress. "The answers to most of our problems are in our history. Our past determines our future," he says. Conway lives in Barryville, NY, with his wife, Debbie, and their 200-pound Newfoundland dog, Preston.



**(By Dawn McIntyre, author of the book *The Paper Pirate*, available on Amazon.com)**

### ***Cool as a Cucumber – Tasty Summer Salads***

Chopped salad has become popular recently on many fine dining menus, and at potlucks and on home kitchen tables. So--what is chopped salad, and how does it differ from a regular tossed salad?

In a tossed salad, you may taste two or even several ingredients at a time, but rarely are all present in each mouthful, and the proportion of flavors varies widely from bite to bite. But a well-made chopped salad presents you with a harmonious, balanced combination of sweet, salty, sour and bitter flavors every time.

New Hampshire Bowl and Board describes it this way. "Think of your chopped salad as if you were composing a piece of music, and think about your artful arrangement of chopped greens and vegetables in a beautiful chopped salad bowl. Imagine how strange classical music would sound if the full orchestra never played at the same time. The cellos might play their lonely part alone for a while, followed by a discordant combination of violins and timpani that then yielded to an odd trumpet solo—but what you would never hear was the rich, interwoven sound of all the instruments, performing together in one perfect song.

"That's the difference between a chopped salad and other salads. In composed salads and layered salads, you taste first one ingredient, then another, but you never know the sensation of all ingredients simultaneously."

The summer season is, of course, the best time to take advantage of fresh greens, herbs and vegetables to create a sumptuous chopped salad. Romaine and iceberg lettuces are the favored choices for chopped salad; more tender lettuces will not hold up as well to mixing everything up with dressing.



You can create a "Firehouse" chopped salad with the most basic ingredients: romaine lettuce, tomato, cucumber, bell pepper, and cheddar or mozzarella cheese. The "Savannah" chopped salad takes on a more unusual flair with grilled chicken, dried cranberries, Gorgonzola cheese, honey roasted almonds, tomato, and cucumber on mixed greens. And the famous "La Scala" is a legendary Italian chopped salad created by Chef Jean Leon, owner of the La Scala restaurant in Beverly Hills, served to Hollywood stars since the 1950s. Its ingredients are iceberg and romaine lettuce, sliced salami, chickpeas and mozzarella cheese, mixed with a red wine vinaigrette dressing. A Greek chopped salad highlights Romaine lettuce, feta cheese, cherry tomatoes, Kalamata olives, red onion, artichoke hearts and cucumbers.

Virtually anything your heart desires can become a chopped salad. Purists would have you use a mezzaluna (a "half moon" or double-handle chopper) to actually chop your lettuce and other ingredients inside a wooden salad bowl. But using a cutting board and a good sharpened knife can give you the same good results. If you are serving your chopped salad immediately, prepare the salad and the dressing and then pour the dressing over the salad, mixing gently. Letting it sit a few minutes will allow the flavors to gel without getting soggy.

Enjoy! Buon Appetito!

#### **La Scala chopped salad dressing recipe:**

- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 2 cloves garlic minced
- 3 teaspoons Dijon mustard or 1 teaspoon dry mustard
- 2 teaspoons finely chopped shallots
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt and pepper
- 1/3 cup grated Pecorino Romano cheese or Parmesan cheese

Mix all ingredients in a small bowl and whisk well, or use a small jar with a lid and shake well.

**(by Mary Greene, poet, author and regular contributor to the GOT newsletter)**


## ***We're Celebrating Summer with a Pig Roast Fundraiser!***


### *Fun, Food, and Fundraising for a Great Cause*

Join Growing Older Together on **Saturday, July 12th, 2025**, for a festive afternoon along the beautiful Delaware River in Milanville, PA! From **2:00 PM to 6:00 PM**, we'll be hosting a **Family Pig Roast** to raise funds that help us provide essential services to seniors in our community—especially those who need support but may not be able to afford our modest annual dues. Proceeds will also help expand awareness of our mission through targeted marketing.


This isn't just a pig roast—it's a full afternoon of intergenerational summer fun! Expect:

- A delicious pig roast with vegetarian options
- Sweets, games, and entertainment for all ages
- River access and a refreshing saltwater pool
- A warm, welcoming atmosphere on a stunning private property

 **DATE:** Saturday, July 12th (*Rain date: Sunday, July 13th*)

 **TIME:** 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM

 **LOCATION:** The Haberthur Compound, 860 River Road, Milanville, PA

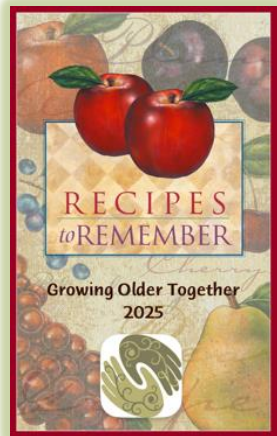
 **TICKETS:** \$30 per person | Children 10 & under FREE

 **GET TICKETS:** <https://myrivertickets.com/events/GOTPigRoast> or at the event

Come celebrate summer, support local seniors, and make memories with neighbors and friends!



## *The GOT Family Cookbook is Here!*



We are excited to announce that *The GOT Family Cookbook* is complete and ready to order!

This special collection of over **150 cherished recipes** from our members, volunteers, and neighbors showcases the incredible diversity of our community. Inside, you'll find everything from appetizers and soups to main dishes inspired by global flavors and hometown favorites—plus an incredible selection of baked goods and desserts. Each recipe tells a story and brings generations of tradition to your table.

Proceeds from the **\$15 sales price** directly support Growing Older Together's mission—helping seniors stay independent and connected in their own homes. Funds raised will help sustain our operations and provide sponsorships for members who need assistance with their annual dues.

Whether you're cooking for yourself or gifting to a friend, this cookbook is a meaningful and delicious way to support our cause. Pick them up at the Family Pig Roast, Riverfest or order online (+\$6 added for shipping and handling) at:

<https://www.paypal.com/ncp/payment/HZ4T8ZZRSSQAL>

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Your **tax-deductible donation** will go a long way in sustaining GOT as we continue to fulfill our mission: to give residents aged 60 and older who live in Wayne County, PA, western Sullivan County, NY, northern Pike County, PA, and surrounding areas both the practical means and the social connections to live independently in their homes. GOT is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Any amount, large or small, is welcome. Please visit our website and click the **Donate** button, or mail your check to GOT, 830 Main Street #574, Honesdale, PA 18431. Thank you in advance for your support.

Looking to plan your estate or make provisions in your will or beneficiary designations? Making bequests to non-profit organizations like GOT are a great way to ensure your legacy makes an impact in your community, benefitting future generations.

Please help spread the word about the benefits of becoming a member and/or volunteer for GOT. If you know a friend or neighbor who might want to offer a helping hand or might benefit from one, share our phone number, 570-630-0509, and/or our web address:

[www.growinggoldertogether.org](http://www.growinggoldertogether.org) Thank you!

Growing Older Together is supported in part by generous grants from the Honesdale National Bank Foundation, Moses Taylor Foundation, Sullivan County Legislature, Wayne Memorial Health Foundation, and Wayne County Community Foundation, as well as with support from the following corporate sponsors:

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## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Growing Older Together collaborates with and is supported by numerous organizations in the area to fulfill our mission, including:

**Delaware Valley Arts Alliance / Tusten Social**  
**The River Reporter / WJFF Radio Catskills**  
**Wayne County Area Agency on Aging / Sullivan County Office of Aging**

Diversity is a Source of Strength, Creativity, and Innovation. Growing Older Together is committed to fostering an environment that welcomes and values every person and respects all identities, cultures, heritages, and abilities.